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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: DPRK NUCLEAR TEST, TAIWAN'S "SECOND  
REPUBLIC CONSTITUTION"

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused their coverage October 21-23 on the year-end Taipei and Kaohsiung mayoral races; on the split between the KMT and the People First Party (PFP) leadership over December's Taipei mayoral election; on the follow-on movements of the "Oust Bian" campaign; and on the difficulties that lie ahead for Taiwan following the suspension of the WTO's Doha round of trade negotiations.

With regard to the U.S. arms procurements bill, the pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's largest-circulation daily, ran a banner headline on page two October 21 that read "Orange [i.e. PFP] Refuses to Sign on Negotiation [Results]; Trouble Arises for [U.S.] Arms Procurement Bill to Be Reviewed by Procedural Committee." In addition, several papers reported October 22 on a letter by former U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage to the Taiwan authorities recently, asking Taiwan to open the bidding for the P-3C antisubmarine aircraft procurement to other U.S. suppliers, rather than designating Lockheed as the only source. The pro-status quo "China Times" also ran a banner headline on page five on October 23 that read "Former U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lobbying for Arms Dealer; Armitage Exposes Inside Stories of State Department; Bian Finds [the Information] Very Useful."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a "China Times" editorial said that, given China's mediation, which has successfully resolved the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula, the world has again witnessed how Washington and Beijing have worked together in maintaining the status quo in East Asia. An editorial in the limited-circulation, conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" also commented on North Korea's recent nuclear test, saying "the danger of a potential regional nuclear race cannot be ruled out." In addition, Koo Kuan-min, former senior advisor to President Chen, discussed the idea of a "Second Republic constitution" in a weekly column in the "Liberty Times." Koo called on the Taiwan people to demonstrate a strong collective will to pass a popular vote on Taiwan's new constitution, in an attempt to make the United States understand and accept this new reality in Taiwan's democracy. End summary.

### ¶3. DPRK Nuclear Test

A) "North Korea's Nuclear Crisis Is Resolved, But Disputes Still Remain"

The pro-status quo "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (10/23):

"Given the mediation of Chinese special envoys, Pyongyang finally promised that it would not perform a second nuclear test. This development is akin to having removed a major part of the fuse of the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. Judging from the atmosphere of the press conference jointly hosted by U.S. Secretary

of State Condoleezza Rice and Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, it seemed that the United States and China have again worked together and concluded a 'crisis management' over North Korea's nuclear crisis, except that none of the core disputes has been resolved, and their best achievement was merely to stop the situation from further deteriorating. This kind of deadlock will persist for a certain period of time. Even though Taiwan may be a mere observer in this crisis, it has nonetheless again witnessed how Washington and Beijing have worked together to manage all the disputes in the region.

"Without a doubt, North Korea is a genuine 'troublemaker' in East Asia. It has no intention of integrating itself into the international community, nor has it shown any interest in participating in any dialogue in the region. Neither does it want to be restricted by any rules of the game. ... Pyongyang has several strategies, and none of its neighboring countries can find a way to deal with them: The first strategy is that Pyongyang always picks and toys with the biggest and most sensitive bargaining chip it has. Nuclear tests and ballistic missiles tests are both explosive means, and every time Pyongyang plays with these means, it is sure to make the headlines of global media. ... The second strategy is Pyongyang's 'unpredictability'; to put it in plain language, it means one will never guess what it plans to do next. Pyongyang may promise that it will no longer perform any nuclear tests one day, and perhaps after a few days, it will [express] regret and get ready for talks. It will appear to be willing to talk this moment, and the next moment it might refuse to go to the negotiation table. You'll never guess what surprising move it will take the next moment. Pyongyang's third strategy is that intimidation on North Korea will never work. To put it in plain language, it means 'You wouldn't dare hit me.' The United States attacked Iraq once it said it intended to, but it never dares to behave the same way toward North Korea. ...

"Many international observers agree that Beijing is the biggest  
REPUBLIC CONSTITUTION"

loser in the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula this time, because the international community expects China to wield its influence to force Pyongyang to return to the negotiation table. But the games Pyongyang was playing got bigger and bigger, indicating that Beijing's influence over Pyongyang has greatly declined. ... Such a judgment may seem accurate, but it is useless as a conclusion, because it was after all Tang Jiaxuan's visit to and negotiation with Pyongyang personally that has resulted in Kim Jong-Il's promise that there would not be a second nuclear test. In other words, in the end, the window that can force Pyongyang to submit has to be opened from Beijing's side.

"For Taiwan, the conclusion of the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula has made it witness again how Washington and Beijing have worked together in maintaining the status quo in East Asia. Even though the United States and China have differences with regard to their separate positions in resolving disputes in the region, their positions regarding 'maintaining the status quo' have come closer. Pyongyang attempted to alter the status quo, but the move has consequently drawn Beijing and Washington closer to each other, and the rein that has been put on Pyongyang's neck has been gathered up more tightly. It follows that Taiwan will likely achieve nothing should it attempt to change the 'status quo' jointly maintained by the United States and China."

B) "Beijing's North Korean Dilemma"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post"  
[circulation: 30,000] editorialized (10/21):

"Beijing has been in an unenviable situation since Pyongyang's nuclear test on Oct. 9. Mainland China, which is North Korea's only ally as well as its major provider of economic aid, was given only a 20 minute advance warning prior to the underground test. It's an embarrassment, if not humiliation, for Chinese president Hu Jintao who is clearly at a loss about how to deal with this 'ally' for whom hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops had died in the 1950-53 Korea War. To punish or not to punish the Hermit Kingdom and its Dear Leader Kim Jong-Il is a dilemma for Beijing. All the major powers, especially the United States, are waiting to see what kind

of action Beijing will take to resolve the North Korean nuclear crisis, as Beijing is the only country which wields influence over Pyongyang. ...

"Now it's water under the bridge. Willy-nilly, the world will live with the unpleasant fact that Pyongyang is the ninth member of the nuclear club. It is interesting to watch who will follow suit, now that the door has been blasted open by Pyongyang. It is evident that Iran, another member of the axis of evil, is on the threshold despite threats from Washington. A nuclear Korean peninsula is ominous because South Korea and Japan are under the direct threat of Pyongyang's weapons of mass destruction. Mainland China will be particularly uneasy with the bomb in its backyard. Who believes that Kim's bomb is aimed only at the United States? The danger of a potential regional nuclear race cannot be ruled out."

#### 14. Taiwan's "Second Republic Constitution"

"The Conception and Implementation of a 'Second Republic Constitution'"

Koo Kuan-min, former Senior Adviser to the President, noted in the "Weekly Comment" in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 600,000] (10/22):

"... We all know that the two most important objectives for Taiwan to become a normal country are the rectification of its name and the writing a new constitution. However, there are two major obstacles that are hindering Taiwan from becoming a normal country, namely, the United States and China. As we are pushing the democratic engineering of a new constitution right now, we have clearly felt the pressure from the United States. ...

"Only by obtaining a clear understanding of U.S. policy principles can we pursue our national interests pragmatically. Three months ago, I raised the idea of 'freezing the Republic of China Constitution and instituting a second constitution' to the U.S. side for the first time. This idea mainly stemmed from the 'freezing' of the National Unification Council. ... But the United States still has strong doubts about Taiwan's plan to write a new constitution, primarily because it would be akin to substantive 'Taiwan independence' should the declaration of 'sovereignty' be written into the new constitution. Such a move will contradict the three major principles of the U.S. cross-Straits policy. ...

"In addition to elaborating on the idea of 'freezing [the ROC Constitution],' I also told the United States that if they continue to pressure Taiwan not to push certain pragmatic plans to turn REPUBLIC CONSTITUTION"

Taiwan into a normal country, and if they cannot give the Taiwan people hopes and dreams for the future, the Taiwan people will really give up hope someday and turn their support to Ma Ying-jeou and the KMT who advocate 'ultimate unification' [with China]. [I asked them] if this is what they are happy to see, Taiwan annexed by China and becoming part of China? Will this meet the United States' national interests in the Western Pacific? The United States was able to understand my elaboration and even asked me 'Have people in your country discussed your idea of a second constitution?'

"The United States is a democratic country, and Americans are clearly aware of the importance of public opinion; they are gravely concerned about the process of pushing for a new constitution. The Taiwan people, therefore, must demonstrate a strong collective will and pass the 'new constitution' via a popular vote. I believe that the United States will consequently accept this new reality about Taiwan's democracy, because this is the true meaning of democracy - namely, democratic rights for the people. ..."

YOUNG